



447 441-2

RICHARD STRAUSS

Also sprach Zarathustra

TILL EULENSPIEGEL · DON JUAN

BERLINER PHILHARMONIKER · HERBERT VON KARAJAN

STEREO

STEREO 447 441-2 GOR



STEREO

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R. STRAUSS: ALSO SPRACH ZARATHUSTRA · TILL EULENSPIEGEL
DON JUAN U.A. - BERLINER PHILHARMONIKER/KARAJAN

447 441-2 GOR



[1 - 9]

[10]

[11]

[12]

RICHARD STRAUSS
(1864-1949)

Also sprach Zarathustra op. 30

Thus spoke Zarathustra

Ainsi parlait Zarathoustra

Così parlò Zaratustra

Solo-Violine: Michel Schwalbé

[35'05]

Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche op. 28

Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks

Les Joyeuses Equipées de Till l'Espègle

I tiri burloni di Till Eulenspiegel

[15'30]

Don Juan op. 20

Salome:

Tanz der sieben Schleier

Dance of the Seven Veils

Danse des sept voiles

Danza dei sette veli

[18'03]

[10'09]

Berliner Philharmoniker
Herbert von Karajan

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RICHARD STRAUSS (1864-1949)

Also sprach Zarathustra op. 30

Tondichtung für großes Orchester (frei nach Friedrich Nietzsche)

[35'05]

Thus spoke Zarathustra

Tone-poem for large orchestra (freely after Friedrich Nietzsche)

① Einleitung Introduction	[1'50]	④ Von der Wissenschaft Of Science and Learning	[4'32]
② Von den Hinterweltlern Of the Backworldsmen	[3'29]	⑦ Der Genesende The Convalescent	[5'15]
③ Von der großen Sehnsucht Of the Great Longing	[2'07]	⑧ Das Tanzlied The Dance-Song	[8'00]
④ Von den Freuden und Leidenschaften Of Joys and Passions	[1'59]	⑨ Nachtwandlerlied Song of the Night Wanderer	[5'05]
⑤ Das Grablied The Song of the Grave	[2'49]	Solo-Violin: Michel Schwalbe	

⑩ Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche op. 28
nach alter Schelmenweise –
in Rondeauform

[15'30]

Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks
after an old picaresque legend –
in rondeau form

⑪ Don Juan op. 20
Tondichtung nach Nikolaus Lenau
Tone-poem after Nikolaus Lenau

[18'03]

Salome:

⑫ Tanz der sieben Schleier
Dance of the Seven Veils

[10'09]

Berliner Philharmoniker · Herbert von Karajan

Sumptuous tone and virtuosity of the highest order make the DGG Karajan an electrifying *Zarathustra*, arguably the best on the market. The engineers produce recorded sound of the greatest realism and warmth, wholly natural in its aural perspective and free from gimmickry.

Vividly characterized performances of both symphonic poems [Don Juan, Till Eulenspiegel]...played with stunning virtuosity and recorded with great fidelity by the DGG engineers. These are among the finest available performances of these works.

Penguin Guide (1977)

KARAJAN AND STRAUSS

It was Whitsuntide and I was in Salzburg's Grosses Festspielhaus when I heard just about the most beautiful sound imaginable wafting from a distant room. I say "room". It was, in fact, the main hall of the Festspielhaus. Medieval philosophers would probably have identified the sound as the Music of the Spheres. It was, in fact, Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic rehearsing the passage for divided strings near the start of *Also sprach Zarathustra*. This is the passage in which – after the horns' quiet statement of Nietzsche's mocking "Credo in unum Deum" – Strauss paints a lavishly expressive portrait of primordial man.

Like many Austrian and German musicians of his time, Karajan was deeply influenced by Strauss. He was fascinated by his genius as a conductor (so calm, so logical, so rhythmically astute) and inspired by Strauss's music. The greatest pages of Strauss – the epilogue to *Don Quixote*, *Metamorphosen*, the last half hour of Act I of *Der Rosenkavalier* – moved him as much as anything in his repertory. Like Strauss himself when he was conducting his own music, Karajan was incapable of vulgarity. No one has played *Also sprach Zarathustra* with more lustrous sound – with more range and weight of tone – than Karajan and the Berlin Philharmonic. Yet

nothing here is overdone. Even the notorious *Tanzlied*, Nietzsche's Superman cavorting to the strains of a luscious Viennese waltz, is made to seem ecstatic and pure. The fact is, *Also sprach Zarathustra* is no mere *fin-de-siècle* showpiece. At the end, after the terrible clamour of the Midnight Bell, Man and Nature are seen as being both close to one another yet also tragically separate. The key of B set against the adjacent but alien key of C (a grimly prophetic message to our own environmentally conscious age).

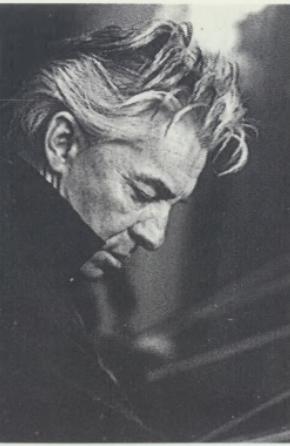
A bit of a scamp himself, with a wicked sense of humour, Karajan loved *Till Eulenspiegel* though he doesn't seem to have felt the need to conduct it as often as, say, Furtwängler who played it in concert over 40 times in the final few years of his life. *Don Juan*, by contrast, featured regularly in Karajan's programmes. He included it in his first ever professional concert, in Salzburg on 22 January 1929. It was part of the programme in January 1946 when he made his first appearance with the Vienna Philharmonic in Vienna. And he continued to play it well into the 1980s even when his preferences had turned to more philosophical, less libidinously-inspired Strauss.

It hardly needs to be said that Strauss's music presents enormous technical difficulties for an orchestra and its conductor. The notes must be mastered, yet the music isn't simply in the notes. (Strauss once stopped an orchestra

which had been prepared by its conductor down to the last semiquaver [16th note]. "I can hear all the notes!" he moaned. "Please. Give me an impression of the music.") Karajan was always the absolute master here, both in his knowledge of the scores and his genius in directing them. One story must suffice. It concerns the notoriously difficult opening of *Don Juan*: the strings' blazing syncopated uprush, and the entry of woodwind and brass (including a bass trombone) later in the first bar.

An English trombonist recalls: "Karajan made some loose, ethereal movement which the strings understood, and the first fiddle led them up the sweep. But I couldn't see or feel a downbeat at all – he just had his arms in the air, he wasn't going to beat like a bandmaster – and I missed the entry. I think most conductors would have stopped and made a song and dance. Karajan simply looked over as if to say 'I know my job, I hope you know yours ... when we come to the recapitulation you'll know what I am doing, and we'll see what you do.' When the recapitulation came, of course, I was ready and played. He just glanced over again, as if to say OK, but not a word was spoken."

Richard Osborne



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